

# The Musical World.

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## MDLLE. ADRIANOFF.

THE mazourka and the minuet executed by this lady in the opera of *Pietro il Grande* must be regarded purely in the light of national dances. They are indeed among the most finished and exquisite specimens of the dances peculiar to the extreme north-eastern countries of Europe—Russia and Poland especially. Madlle. Adrianoff, who is a Russian, regards them in the proper light, and, what is more, possesses the art of investing them with all the spirit of poetry. With a perfectly-proportioned figure, and an intelligent face, Madlle. Adrianoff combines the secrets of her art in no ordinary degree. Her movements and gestures are easy, natural, and graceful. In the motions of her arms there is an especial charm, which arises from the absence of all that is angular, rigid, or inelegant. Not less worthy of admiration are her *poses*. There is little doubt that when the public become familiar with these dances that mazourka and minuet will create an equal furor. To appreciate and enjoy them it is only necessary to enter into their spirit, to study their national *color*—so to speak.

Madlle. Adrianoff's successes in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Paris, have gained for her a high reputation on the Continent. Her *repertoire* is said to be very extended, consisting of a great variety of novel and picturesque dances. She is, it must be added, not merely a dancer of *pas de caractère*, but a *grande danseuse* in the higher and more refined departments of the art. Before the season concludes, Mr. Gye will, no doubt, give the public an opportunity of admiring Madlle. Adrianoff in a *divertissement* of sufficient importance to afford her an opportunity of displaying her abilities to the best advantage. This would certainly prove an attraction, and would be only an act of justice to the young lady.

## FOREIGN RESUME.

PARIS.—Last week, the President of the French Republic visited the Grand Opera, to witness the representation of *Giselle*. A hundred and fifty places had been kept in the pit for the seamen who had come from Cherbourg to take part in the *fêtes* of the 15th inst. The entertainments began with *Xacarilla*, which served to please the sailors vastly, as the story often required the appearance of a number of Jack-tars on the stage. The President remained until the conclusion of the evening's entertainments, although they did not terminate until after twelve o'clock.

Madlle. Lagrua will make her second *début* at the Grand Opera early next week, as Alice, in *Robert the Devil*.

*Le Longe d'une Nuit d'Été*, by Ambroise Thomas, was played last week at the *Opéra Comique*.

M. Reber's opera is in a state of great forwardness at the *Opéra Comique*. It is possible, however, that the first representation may be delayed a day or two later than was expected, in consequence of a change in the distribution of the parts.

The tenor, Paget, has been definitively engaged at the *Opéra Comique*.

Madlle. Louise Rouvroy is re-engaged at the *Théâtre Lyrique*.

Félicien David is, at the present, staying at Chatou, where he is engaged in finishing his new work for the *Théâtre Lyrique*. The words are by Méry.

Madame Medori has left Paris for Brussels, where she will stay a week. She will then set out for Vienna, and thence for St. Petersburg, where she is engaged for the winter.

Joachim has left Cologne for Weimar, after a short stay in the former place.

The Hamburgh papers relate a very wonderful (if true) circumstance, to the following effect:—Madlle. Grandjean, who gives musical lessons in Hamburgh, has recently discovered in a village, in the environs of the city, a young girl with a magnificent voice, and what is still more strange, in such excellent training that its rustic possessor, whose name is Ziegler, will appear very shortly at the Thalia Theatre. A few months ago, Fraulein Ziegler used to sell milk about the street.

After playing in the *Favorite*, Madame Stoltz made her second *début*, at Rio Janeiro, in *Semiramide*, and was greeted with one incessant series of ovations from the beginning to the end of the evening's entertainment. The Emperor, with all his court, was present, and was the first to give the signal for applauding Madame Stoltz, as soon as she appeared upon the stage. Madame Stoltz was called forward ten different times in the course of her performance. The amateurs of Rio Janeiro never heard Rossini's music sung in such a manner before. According to all accounts, Madame Stoltz was even more astonishing in Arsace than she had been in Léonor.

There is a report that Verdi is about to be named a member of the Legion of Honour.

*Le Journal de Constantinople*, of the 19th July, brings us news of Vivier, who is designated in the feuilleton as, Un

*esprit incroyable et un cor merveilleux.* It appears that Vivier is the same he ever was, both as a man and as an artist. He does not make himself more common at Constantinople than he did at London or Paris, and it is very rarely that the public has a chance of hearing him; when they are lucky enough to do so, however, their surprise, admiration, and enthusiasm are exalted to the highest degree.

VIENNA.—The mortal remains of Haydn were lately interred, in the presence of the authorities, and the witnesses who had been summoned to be present on the occasion. Some of the papers had spread a report, that while the celebrated composer's body was exposed in the chapel of the cemetery, the head had been carried off. The report at last became so generally believed, that the authorities decided on exhuming the body. The result of the investigation is not yet known.

#### HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

THIS establishment closed for the season on Saturday night, when the performances consisted of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and the new ballet of *Zelie*. The house was crowded. After the opera the National Anthem was sung.

The review of the past season will take less words than usual. Although the most eventful, and by many degrees the most trying, in the career of the present management, it has been the medium of offering fewer novelties of interest to the public than any of its precursors. The mere fact of the theatre remaining open long enough to complete the number of subscription nights denotes a vitality almost unparalleled in the history of theatrical speculations. Not to speak of the formidable opposition which declared itself in 1847, and has been growing in importance and increasing in popularity year by year, a series of disappointments and disasters enough to dishearten the most sanguine of directors marked the progress of the season, and menaced Her Majesty's Theatre with premature dissolution. Against this, however, Mr. Lumley has perseveringly fought, and "by hook or by crook," by one expedient after another, he has contrived to weather the storm. It will be remembered that, not long since, the theatre was advertised to be let, and the retirement of Mr. Lumley from the post of director was announced. Now, however, the season has terminated; the theatre remains unlet, and the advertisements have been withdrawn. An explanation of this, there is reason to believe, will shortly be made public. Meanwhile—it may be stated in anticipation—there are reasons for believing that Her Majesty's Theatre will reopen in 1853 with fresh resources and on a basis of solidity hitherto unprecedented. Whether Mr. Lumley—who, whatever may have been his ill-luck since the organization of the rival establishment, must be admitted to have done more than any previous manager to raise the position and multiply the attractions of Her Majesty's Theatre—will be solicited to undertake the direction has not transpired. It is doubtful, however, if any one possessing equal experience and knowledge of affairs could be found as his substitute.

The chronicle of the season 1852 may be briefly told. The appearance of the prospectus was so long delayed, that a general doubt arose as to whether Her Majesty's Theatre would open at all. At last, however, the anxiously expected document was published, and the promises upon the

face of it led the world to the anticipation of a series of by no means uninteresting performances. That some of these promises were afterwards unfulfilled appears to have been not so much the fault of Mr. Lumley as of that great transgressor—circumstance. Circumstance was adverse to Mr. Lumley, and did the best to overthrow him, by depriving him of the services of a certain Mademoiselle Joanna Wagner, who was to have been the star of the season, and to outshine Jenny Lind herself. Mademoiselle Joanna did not appear, and Mr. Lumley lost a good many of his subscribers and disappointed the rest. Why Mademoiselle Joanna did not appear is familiar to the public "as household words;" it is, therefore, needless to refer to it more at length. The theatre opened on Thursday, April 1, with *Maria di Rohan*. Signor Ferlotti, the new barytone, who played Enrico, came to us with a great reputation; but, like many others who have come with a great reputation, he failed to maintain it. Though not without ability, Signor Ferlotti is unequal to sustain a first-rate position in the Italian opera of London, whatever he may do elsewhere. He is not of the race of Ronconis and Tamburinis, but may serve well enough to occupy a secondary post. Madame Fiorentini, whose improvement was remarked generally, and who has sung too rarely this year, was Maria; Calzolari, one of the most correct of Italian singers, Chalais; Mademoiselle Ida Bertrand, the always painstaking *contralto*, De Gondi; and Signor Fortini, a new bass of little mark, from Paris (with "a great reputation"), in the small part of *De Fiesque*, was the fellow-debutant of Signor Ferlotti. The ballet was inaugurated by a *divertissement* entitled *Une Baile de Candil*, in which Madame Guy Stephan, after an absence of eight years, was welcomed as an old favourite, and the *corps de ballet*, headed by Mademoiselles Rosa, Esper, La moreux, Pascales, Allegrini, &c., proved to be as charming and accomplished as before. The band, under Mr. Balfe, allowing for the irreparable loss of his chief violoncello, Signor Piatti (a seceder to the Royal Italian Opera), was, with a few reinforcements, pronounced as good, if not better, than that of the previous year. The chorus, as usual, was inefficient; Herr Ganz, the chorus-master, though both zealous and able, could not impart to his followers that in which not a few of them were deficient—viz., voice. *Maria di Rohan* was represented several times, but it did not "draw," which was not at all surprising.

The revival of *L'Italiana in Algeri*, on the 13th of April, was doubly welcome. Rossini's early, fresh, and by no means hackneyed music was welcome; and Mademoiselle Angri, a great favourite, was welcome, not only because, having been unannounced in the prospectus, her appearance was unexpected, but on account of the improved ease and finish exhibited in her singing. The return of Signor Belletti, the best florid bass on the Italian stage, after his absence with Jenny Lind in America, was also an event of importance. Signor Ferranti was commendably industrious as Taddeo, and Signor Mercuriali and Mademoiselle Feller, two useful artists from last year's *troupe*, sustained subordinate parts with their accustomed care. In Lindor, Signor Calzolari showed himself, not for the first time, one of the purest of Rossinian singers. *L'Italiana*, however, like *Maria di Rohan*, failed to "draw."

The next event was the *rentrée* of Sophie Cruvelli, April 17, in her great part of *Norma*. It was asserted that this highly popular artist had broken her engagement, and would not come to London. She came, however, looking, acting, and singing better than before. So striking an improvement could not fail to attract unanimous remark, and

Mademoiselle Cruvelli's *reentrée* was a real triumph. Signor Gardoni, improved both in voice and stamina, and singing with as much grace as ever, was Pollio; and the great Lablache gave weight to the performance by his impersonation of Oroveso. From this point affairs seemed to "look up." The Queen went to see Cruvelli's *Norma* on the following Saturday; the *Barbiere* was produced on the 22nd, with Cruvelli as Rosina; and on the 29th, the immortal *Fidelio*, Cruvelli as Leonora, her most striking and admirable performance, was received with all the old enthusiasm. Calzolari, Sussini, and Belletti replaced Mr. Sims Reeves, and his associates of last season, in the characters of Florestan, Rocco, and Pizarro. Meanwhile Rosati reappeared with undiminished means and attractions, in a new *divertissement* by M. Gosselin, entitled *La Fete des Rosières*; on the 1st of May *La Cenerentola* was produced for Mademoiselle Angri, whose execution of the final rondo was much praised; and the revival of *Ernani*, on the 8th, and of the *Sonnambula* on the 20th, brought out Cruvelli in two of her most studied and effective characters.

The successes, however, were, it would appear, exclusively before the curtain; since, although the house was always full, the treasury was always empty, and from behind the scenes issued reports about the speedy winding up of affairs and the actual closing of the theatre. Mademoiselle Wagner was at the bottom of it all. The Vice-Chancellor had granted an injunction, which prevented her from singing at Covent Garden, and the Chancellor had declined to sanction its withdrawal. Nevertheless, Mademoiselle Wagner would not, or could not, fulfil her first engagement with Mr. Lumley; and thus, in a pecuniary point of view, the injunction was a dead letter to the director of Her Majesty's Theatre. Everything had been held in suspense, in expectation of a decisive settlement of the Wagner business, and when, at length, it was found that she could sing at neither theatre, the disappointment was so great that it acted as an effective check upon further speculation. There can be little doubt, indeed, that, so far as the Italian Operas were concerned, Mademoiselle Johanna Wagner was the ruin of the season of 1852. So great a fame had preceded her, and so much had she been counted on, that her defalcation threw everything into disorder; confidence was destroyed, and each fresh announcement was regarded with distrust. It was about this time that rumours of Her Majesty's Theatre being about to close were most rife. Facts that came out, day after day, gave them a colour of truth. This singer would not sing, that dancer would not dance; operas were advertised and continually postponed; Balfe had left the theatre, Gardoni had left the theatre; Lablache was dissatisfied, Cruvelli disgusted. Such were the reports that flew about in all directions; while the non-arrival of Madame Sontag, whose name, announced from the first in the prospectus, was, ever and anon, printed at the foot of the bills, increased the general dissatisfaction. About this time a meeting of noblemen and gentlemen, friends and well-wishers of Her Majesty's Theatre, took place, in the great music-room, under the auspices of the Dukes of Leinster and Cleveland, the Marquis of Clanricarde, Baron Brunow, &c., at which a resolution was carried to raise a fund, by subscription, for the purpose of aiding the director in his efforts to carry on the performances to the end of the season. The object of these noblemen and gentlemen was attained; but, it must be added, in a great measure, at the expense of the artists, who continued to give their services and take their chance of remuneration. It may there-

fore fairly be said that the business was carried on by the principal singers and dancers, aided by the committee of noblemen and gentlemen—and supported by Dr. Bacher (memorable as the double agent of Mademoiselle Wagner and Mr. Lumley, and the rejected of both), to whose activity the engagements of Madame de la Grange and Madame Charton, the performance of *Casilda*, and other services rendered to the establishment, were mainly due. It is useless blinking facts. The new committee took no responsibility on themselves beyond that of insuring the current salaries of the orchestra, chorus, and supernumeraries; and without the co-operation of the artists holding the first rank in the establishment the theatre must have shortly closed.

This was the state of affairs when Madame de la Grange made her first appearance on the London boards (May 22) in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, with complete and well-merited success. Madame de la Grange also arrived with a "great reputation" from the Continent; but in her instance there was a justification for the plea. Although not essentially dramatic, her talent, in its peculiar line, was easily recognised as first-rate; and since her *debut* she has been one of the mainstays of the theatre, which, but for her, after an unexpected event to which we shall have to allude, would have been without a *prima donna*. There was nothing else to remark in the execution of *Lucia* except the continued advance of Gardoni, whose performance of *Edgardo* excited a more than ordinary degree of attention and interest. On the same evening two new dancers, Donna Pepita Oliva, a Spaniard, and Mademoiselle Forli, from the Grand Opera in Paris, made their *debuts*, with so little *eclat* that their names vanished from the bills a very short time afterwards. Madame de la Grange appeared, subsequently, in *La Prova d'un Opera Seria*, and in *Don Pasquale*. In the first, by her execution of an *air varié* from the pen of an Hungarian composer (F. Erkell), and in the last, through the medium of one of Schuloff's pianoforte mazurkas, arranged for the voice, which created a sensation unparalleled in its kind, she exhibited traits of vocalization that declared her, within certain limits, not only an excellent but an original singer. The revival of the *ballet* of *La Sylphide*, for Mademoiselle Forli, was only the prelude to that lady's exit from the boards of Her Majesty's Theatre. Her place was taken by Mademoiselle Fleury, an elegant *danseuse*, who occupied a prominent post at the Royal Italian Opera during the first season (1847). The success of Mademoiselle Fleury, and that of M. Durand, a dancer who, if the pantomimic element be in him, may some day fill up the vacant place left by the inimitable Perrot, constituted an effective reinforcement to the *ballet*, which, up to this time, had rested wholly on the shoulders of Mademoiselle Rosati and the *coryphées*. The appearance of Signor Bettini (June 15), who, in 1848, was one of the Covent Garden tenors, did not add to the attractions of *Ernani*. Calzolari was unanimously preferred to the boisterous *tenore robusto*, who emphatically illustrated the citation, "*Vox et preterea nihil*." Madame de la Grange attempted the first act of *Semiramide*, for Signor Puzzi's benefit; but the character was unsuited to her, and the features of the performance (a very imperfect one) were the Arsace of Mademoiselle Angri and the Assur of Signor Belletti. The most successful production of the season, in the *ballet* line, was *Zelie* (June 24), a sort of *rechauffée* of the old *divertissement* entitled *Les Elemens*. Rosati, and all the principal dancers, were engaged in it, and it continued a favourite until the termination of the season.



Meanwhile Cruvelli was announced to appear as Desdemona, in *Otello*; and was set down, moreover, for no end of new parts—to-day Ninetta, to-morrow Lucrezia Borgia, the next day Valentine, the day after, Semiramide, and the following day Casilda—until, at last, it was impossible to know what she was really going to essay. The Gordian knot was cut, however, and the difficulty solved, by the young lady herself, in a summary and unexpected manner. On the eve of her anticipated appearance in *Lucrezia Borgia*, for the debut of Signor de Bassini, the new baritone, Mademoiselle Sophie set sail for the Continent, and retired to her native fastnesses in Westphalia, leaving Her Majesty's Theatre, Mr. Lumley, the committee of noblemen and gentlemen, and Signor de Bassini, to get on as well as they could without her. The exact cause of this precipitate flight, which robbed the subscribers to Her Majesty's Theatre of their most distinguished favourite, did not transpire. Nevertheless, it may be pleaded as a valid excuse for Signor de Bassini, who was compelled, in consequence, to make his *debut* as Figaro, instead of Alphonso. This gentleman came to London with a greater reputation than any of his predecessors; but he made little effect on the occasion of his first appearance (July 1); and it was not until the following Tuesday that he had an opportunity of redeeming his laurels, and establishing his right to be considered an actor and singer of high pretensions. The part of Maria was again unsuited to Madame de la Grange, who is out of her element in high tragedy. Elvira, in *I Puritani* on the other hand (July 8) added another to the deserved successes of this clever lady, and gave Signor de Bassini a fresh occasion of showing that his real forte was in serious opera. Gardoni and Lablache were both admirable, and the general execution of *I Puritani* was among the best of the season. *Otello*, revived on the 15th, was not so satisfactory. Signor Bettini could neither sing nor understand the part of the hero, and Madame de la Grange, although her singing displayed many excellent qualities, was less at her ease in Desdemona than in other characters. The features of the performance were Calzolari's Roderigo and Lablache's Elmiro.

The reappearance of Mademoiselle Favanti in *Cenerentola* (July 20) is too recent to demand further allusion; nor is it necessary to reiterate our impressions of Madame Charton's successful debut on the Italian stage, as Amina (July 27); or to say anything more about the opera of *Casilda*, produced with great care and small success a few days afterwards. This last, with a slight ballet-divertissement, entitled *La Bouquetière*, for Madame Guy Stephan, may be said to have wound up the season—the three extra nights, at playhouse prices, including the worst performance of *Don Giovanni* we have ever heard (on Monday week for Balfe's benefit), not coming into the regular account. The debuts of Madame Taccani Tasca, formerly a *soprano* of eminence, as Zerlina, and of Madame Evelina Garcia, as Elvira, with Signor de Bassini's first appearance as *Don Giovanni*, might have claimed a word of notice under less unfortunate circumstances.

To conclude,—the season 1852, for reasons already explained, has been a disastrous one. That it should ever have fulfilled its career has caused no little surprise. Comparing the prospectus with the actual performances, we miss Mademoiselle Wagner, Madame Sontag, Signor Negrini, &c.,—we miss the comic opera of Meyerbeer, composed expressly for Madame Sontag—and we miss other things of less consequence. On the other hand, Madame de la Grange, Mademoiselle Angri, Madame Charton, and Signor Bettini, were

in excess of the "promissory note." In reference to the general department there has been little to complain of. Balfe has shown no lack of zeal and talent (although, for a few nights, he was absent from his post, which was filled by M. Tolbecque). Mr. Marshall has done the best, with the means at his disposal, for the scenic department; M. Gosselin (aided by M. Nadaud in the orchestra) has been as diligent and useful as ever in the ballet; and perhaps no one could have obtained order out of chaos so successfully as Mr. Harris, whose superintendence of the *mise en scène* has more than once proved of vital importance.

Meanwhile, although the form of government and the name of the director are as yet moot questions, we have no reason to doubt that in 1853 Her Majesty's Theatre will reopen its doors to the public under more favourable auspices, and with a much better prospect of success.

#### ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

##### FIRST NIGHT OF PIETRO IL GRANDE.

JULLIEN's long-expected new grand opera, *Pietro il Grande*, was at length produced on Tuesday, and was given in presence of one of the largest assemblies of the season. All the *dilettanti* of London were present; many confident of an eminent success; some sceptical as to any success whatsoever. It was certainly a high flight for Jullien to take, from the ball-room to the theatre—from dance music to the grand opera. But had Jullien given the public no inkling of his dramatic capabilities in his previous works? Were his quadrilles, waltzes, &c., mere dance tunes? Did he give no indications of a higher talent in his orchestral preludes and his fantasia arrangements? Did he show no leaning to the true and beautiful in music in his selections and programmes? Was he, in short, a mere Musard, or a Meyerbeer in embryo? These are questions which may now be put confidently by those who put confidence in Jullien's powers, not with an idea to an answer, but as arguments interrogative and refutative of what the querists themselves were led to expect. Jullien, in his effusions for the dance, showed himself above mere ball tunes. His melodies had something else besides marked rhythm, flow, and tunefulness. They always indicated a purpose. There was always a meaning attached to them. Jullien wrote no bars at random. To a keen appreciator this was the dramatic element lying latent. His ears and sense of thinking, must have been dull indeed who heard nothing in Jullien's Swiss Quadrille, or in his Grand Exhibition Quadrille, beyond a mere quintet of prettily-arranged airs to tantalize the feet of young demoiselles. In fact, Jullien's quadrilles were compositions *per se*, founded on an entirely new plan, and giving scope to highly dramatic effects, as was evidenced in the above works. Besides this, there was always something in Jullien's songs, ballads, &c., beyond the mere modern cut and figure, which showed that the composer was but toying in his vocation. To the many—at least, a great many—these did not appear; and the many—at least, a great many—gave Jullien credit for merely writing compositions for the ball-room, in which they acknowledged he stood without a competitor. How much the "many" and the "great many" were mistaken is now matter of history. Jullien's *Pietro il Grande* achieved a success on Tuesday night which could be achieved by a work of the highest pretensions only, and which must for ever seal the lips of speculation as to the composer's dramatic talents.

As we are not about to enter into an analysis of the music

—which we shall defer until the various compositions are sent us for review—we may set out by stating, that the success of *Pietro il Grande* was greatly endangered on Tuesday night by its inordinate length, and was only redeemed by the brilliancy and attractions of the last act, whereby there was created a real enthusiasm at the fall of the curtain. The opera commenced at half-past seven, and finished at half-past twelve. Five mortal hours of the best music at a sitting is "most tolerable and not to be endured." But besides its length, there were other obstacles to the success of *Pietro il Grande*, which presented themselves in the second act. It seemed that the audience were determined to set their faces against the introduction of horses on the stage by Mons. Jullien, for no sooner had the cavalry band made its appearance on the plains of Pultava than there was a volley of hisses from different parts of the house. We say, "by Mons. Jullien," for the self-same horses, as the *Times* observes, "have been applauded in the *Huguenots* and *La Juive*; and consequently it would seem that a license is given to Halevy and Meyerbeer which is interdicted to Jullien. The reason of this is beyond our conjecture. We have seen horses and camels liberally applauded at Her Majesty's Theatre, and we see nothing hissable in the introduction of mounted troops in a battle scene. It was well for Jullien that he had something better in his opera than mere show and spectacle, for some of his dear friends were determined to object to all extraneous aid, thinking, doubtless, that his music would necessarily fall by its own demerit. But they were woefully mistaken. We are sorry to say that Jullien was treated with most unaccountable unfairness by a part of the audience, who seemed determined to lay hold on every opportunity to show their displeasure, and not being able to find cause in the music, expended it on the horses. And so the horses, show and all, have been hissed from the scene, and the opera is all the better for the excision. Thus the enemies of Jullien have, to a great extent, benefitted Jullien by their interference—by the very means by which they tried to crush him.

Of the opera, we can only in this place give a general opinion. The music, while it occasionally flags, is interesting from beginning to end. The whole of the introduction is admirable, and highly dramatic. The madrigal, "Let's hail the present hour," is full of character and spirit, and cannot escape an encore. The Russian national hymn, "Sons of Russland famed in story," has been pronounced the gem of the opera. We know not that, but it is certainly one of the most striking and happy *morceaux*. Peter's ballad, "Farewell, thou humble cot," is very charming, and will sell immensely, as, by the bye, will Catherine's cavatina, "In fair Zaandam." The whole of the conflict scene is well written, but, from its being so badly managed, loses much of its effect. We know nothing more ridiculous than keeping Zeinberg so long lying on the ground, in trembling and affright. The scene, as we understand it, requires that Zeinberg should be confronted by the chorus, who work themselves into a fury, and are going to kill him. When he finds he cannot escape, there is no need whatever for the exhibition of any terror. It would be much more effective if Zeinberg remained dogged during the entire scene, until the very moment of his being threatened by the adzes of the chorus; the absurdity of the action would then be avoided.

We admire immensely the manner in which Jullien has managed the close of the first act. The introduction of snatches of the Russian hymn, in Peter's farewell address, is

particularly happy; and the hymn itself, introduced as the final chorus, is highly effective.

The opening chorus of the second act is boisterous but full of life and character. The toast, drunk by the generals to Peter, is a fine bit of broad choral writing, and is all the better for being cut short. The quartett, "Deep amazement fills my senses," for Tamberlik, Formes, Tagliafico, and Mdle. Zerr, is one of the finest and best-written things in the opera. It is immensely dramatic, and written with a knowledge of vocal part writing, for which few would have given Jullien credit. It is a certain encore, and will be one of the great popularities of *Pietro il Grande*. It was magnificently sung by the four artists.

Formes' Cossack war-song, "With ruthless hand we strike the foe," is a grand rugged song in the Piff-paff style, but totally unlike it in form and construction. Nothing could be fiercer or finer than the singing of Formes.

The duet between Peter and Catherine, although very long, is full of interest, and never flags. If the last movements, "Hark! the loud trumpet sounds," was less over-burthened by the instrumentation, it would be all the better for the singers and the auditors.

The septette which follows is decidedly the finest thing in the opera, and is worthy of Meyerbeer's best moments of inspiration. Nothing can be more happy or more original than the manner in which Jullien has arranged the plan of the battle with the reponses of the generals; and the working up of the *ensemble* with the scale at the end, is absolutely electric.

As the entire battle scene was excised on Thursday, we need only remark here, that with the exception of the two marches, both of which were capital, nothing of moment has been lost. The scene itself, however, presented one of the most magnificent spectacles ever seen on the stage. The details will be found elsewhere.

This act finishes with a powerful chorus, in which a striking point is made by the generals repeating after Peter, *parlante*, their determination to die to a man. We know few things in dramatic music more original and effective.

The third act, to our thinking, is the best. The opening recitative, for Formes, is grave and mysteriously grand, and the conflicting sentiments finely illustrated in the music. The organ behind the scenes, with the chorus of nuns, is employed with the nicest effect. The conspiracy scene is all good, and would be better if the conspirators were less like sticks. Catherine's prayer, "Hear, holy saint," is exquisitely beautiful, and will make the publisher's fortune. The employment of the mazurka subsequently, as an accompaniment to the prayer, is skilful and eminently happy.

Peter's air, "Yes, thou'rt gone," is of the sentimental kind, and is very tuneful and melodious. It is piquantly instrumented, and will also become one of the airs popular. Lefort's ballad, "Oh! hear, beloved master, hear," is of a more energetic character, though full of feeling. This, perhaps, will sell better than any piece in the opera. It is a very fine bass song.

In the ball scene the music is brilliant and picturesque, and the dances exquisite. Jullien has surpassed himself in the mazurka, which is nothing short of incomparable, and which has already seized on the ear public. The Polonaise is also excellent, and we were much surprised at its being cut out the first night—in deference, we learn, to Messieurs the malcontents, who, having first hissed the horses for being non-natural, afterwards hissed the Polonaise for being too natural.

The execution of the opera from beginning to end by the band and principals was splendid. The chorus demand a few more performances before they can be perfect.

To Tamberlik, Formes, and Mademoiselle Anna Zerr we can award the very highest praise. Tamberlik has had a part written for him which suits him to admiration. His acting and singing were both incomparable. In every scene he produced the liveliest sensation, and in those requiring energy and force created a *furor*.

The charming Anna Zerr personated the peasant girl with intense truthfulness. Her acting in the scene where Peter declares himself Czar, was so touching and natural as to turn the whole action into life. Thenceforward the interest of the spectators was involved in the fortunes of Catherine. In every scene Mademoiselle Zerr proved herself the real artist, and the audience received her with the loudest plaudits. Her singing was brilliant in the extreme; this was no more than was expected, but the energy, earnestness, and power displayed by Mdle. Zerr in the second act surpassed what was anticipated. The prayer in the last act was given to perfection. Mdle. Zerr has made an immense hit in Catherine.

The dark and malignant Cossack was represented by Formes in a masterly manner. His grand voice fitted the music wonderfully, its depth and weight rendering it singularly effective in the concerted piece. The "War Song" was given with indomitable force and vigour, and acted with intense purpose. The death of Rossomak was a fine bit of tragic acting, not at all inferior to the great basso's death scene in *Der Freischütz*. Messrs. Jullien and Desmond Ryan are deeply indebted to Tamberlik, Formes, and Mdle. Zerr for their exertions.

Nor, indeed, would it be fair to omit from well-deserved commendation, Stigelli, Tagliafico, Polonini, Soldi, and Luigi Mei, all of whom had taken the utmost pains with their parts, as was most satisfactorily evidenced in the septette, and the finale to the second act. In addition, Stigelli sang his *morceau* in the bacchanalian chorus in the most effective manner; and Tagliafico gave his ballad in the last act with true feeling and expression.

The artists of the ballet must also be praised. Of Mdle. Adrianoff we have elsewhere spoken. She is a most delightful *danseuse*, and "steals upon you like a May-day breaking," rather than dazzles you like a noon-day sun. Of Mdle. Robert we are bound to speak most warmly. Her exertions in the first ballet cannot be overrated. The hornpipe by Mdle. Robert and M. Alexandre, was an inimitable *pas de caractere*. To M. Alexandre, who composed all the figures, the success of the ballet must be partly attributed.

The scenery, decorations, and dresses, are magnificent, and defy description. Some idea may be formed from the details of our cotemporaries.

Signor Maggioni has translated *Pietro* in the very best manner, and has preserved, as far as was consistent with the genius of the two languages, the spirit of the original.

Mr. Brettell, the printer of the books at the Royal Italian Opera, is entitled to his share in the general encomium, for the neat and finished style in which *Pietro il Grande* is got up.

Bref—nothing has been left undone by the management to render Jullien's new grand opera a sure and enduring success.

Of the Thursday night's performance we can only say that

it was an immense success from beginning to end. The battle scene was omitted, and judicious cuts were made elsewhere throughout the opera.

#### OPINIONS OF THE PRESS AFTER THE FIRST NIGHT.

(From the Daily News.)

M. Jullien's long-talked-of opera, *Pietro il Grande*, was at length produced last night, after immense preparation, and an unprecedented number of long and laborious rehearsals. It is difficult to comprehend the policy of bringing forward a new piece of so very costly a kind at a time when the theatre is necessarily within a fortnight of closing, when the season is in reality over, and when the greatest success could not be adequately remunerative. This is a matter, however, which concerns the management more than the public.

The words of this opera are said, in the title-page, to be "adapted from the original English libretto by Desmond Ryan, Esq.," and the Italian version is by Signor Maggioni. Mr. Ryan is favourably known in the literary world, and has produced a work superior in elegance and spirit to the general run of opera poetry; and Signor Maggioni has turned it into "choice Italian." In the construction of the piece, the principal object has been to make it a vehicle for a gorgeous melodramatic spectacle, probability and consistency of plot and incident having evidently been secondary considerations. As to adherence to historical truth, we regard this of little consequence in a work of fiction; for nobody will consult a novel or a play as an authority for any event in the history of Russia, or the biography of Peter the Great.

The plan of the piece is sufficiently simple, yet very incoherent. It is in three acts; each act embracing an incident in the life of the Czar, with long intervals between them. In the first act, Peter is a shipwright at Saardam; in the second, he fights the battle of Pultowa; in the third, he marries Catherine. Each act thus forms a sort of story by itself; and though some ingenuity is shown in keeping the same personages on the stage in scenes distant from each other both in time and place, yet the connexion between them is but lamely preserved, and the effect is, consequently, unsatisfactory.

The scene of the first act is in the Dockyard at Saardam, a most admirable display of scenic art. Great vessels are seen on the stocks, in various stages of progress, with multitudes of shipwrights and other artisans busily at work, forming a picture full of life and reality. As they work they sing a joyous chorus. A group of *vivandiere* girls come to bring them their dinners, and add their "sweet voices" to the rougher harmony of the men. Peter, with some of his officers, is *incog.* among the workmen; and Catherine, the future empress, is the leader of the band of sutlers. Catherine is the belle of the dockyard, and some stolen love-passages take place between her and the handsome stranger, for whose sake she has discarded another swain, Zeinberg by name, whose jealousy makes him a ready tool in the hands of a treacherous follower of the Czar, Rossomak, Hetman of the Cossacks. Zeinberg thrusts himself between the lovers, and a quarrel ensues, but the rivals are separated by their companions. In the next scene Peter is asleep in his hut; the treacherous Rossomak enters with Zeinberg, whom he has instigated to murder Peter. He makes the attempt, but is prevented by Catherine, who suddenly springs forward from a place of concealment, snatches the dagger from his hand, and gives the alarm. Zeinberg meanwhile escapes, but is immediately dragged in by Rossomak, who denounces him as the assassin. The workmen are about to put him to death on the spot, but Peter demands his life, discovering himself as the Russian emperor. He announces his immediate departure, takes a kind leave of his companions, and a tender farewell of Catherine, and departs amidst general cheers.

In the second act the scene is in the Emperor's tent before Pultowa. A party of Russian generals are carousing. Rossomak is called upon for a song, and sings a Cossack war-song, painting his countrymen as so atrociously ruthless that one of the officers remonstrates against so scandalous an aspersions. A quarrel is prevented by the entrance of Peter, who joins the revel. A noise is



heard, and Catherine, muffled in a cloak, enters hastily, and abruptly tells the Czar and his company that, while they are making merry, they are about to be surrounded by the combined forces of the Swedes and Turks. They take her for a spy, but she throws off her cloak, and Peter sees before him his old dockyard flame. How she came there, or how she came by her intelligence, does not appear; but we must suppose that the suttler-girl was impelled by love to follow the emperor. They are equally delighted to meet; and, after a rapturous tête-à-tête, Catherine proposes to visit the Turkish camp and bribe the Vizier to agree to a suspension of hostilities, drawing from her bosom a treaty to that effect, ready written. Peter signs the document, and Catherine departs to accomplish this curious piece of diplomacy. She succeeds by some unaccountable means; the Turk draws off his forces, and Charles the Twelfth is obliged single-handed to fight the fatal battle of Pultowa. The Russians nearly lose the day through the treachery of Rossomak, who, in the heat of the encounter, throws all into confusion by sounding a retreat, for which he and his accomplices are summarily banished to Siberia; and the curtain falls as the Czar rallies his troops and leads them on to a fresh attack.

Another long period elapses, and in the third act we are transported to the Kremlin at Moscow. It is night, and Rossomak enters, muffled in a cloak. He has escaped from Siberia, and has come to the capital in search of revenge. He is waiting for a band of fellow-conspirators, who join him, and it is resolved to attack the emperor that night at a banquet held in the palace; some compunctious visitings, excited during his solitary watch, by strains of solemn music from a neighbouring convent, having been dispelled by the arrival of his companions. Catherine next appears once more a forlorn wanderer, almost fainting with fatigue and hunger. Unseen, she overhears the plot of the conspirators, and hastens to save the emperor's life. In the meantime Peter, who, in compliance with the wishes of his subjects, has consented to marry, and is to choose a consort at the fête about to take place, is alone with his confidant, Lefort, his mind full of the thoughts of Catherine, when a plaintive voice is heard without. Lefort goes out, and returns bearing in his arms a woman who has fainted in the street. It is Catherine, who tells her story, and precautions are taken against the impending danger. The scene changes to the throne-room in the palace, splendidly illuminated, and filled with company. While the dance goes forward, Rossomak and the conspirators enter disguised. He advances, and, presenting a petition to the emperor, attempts to stab him; but Peter seizing the assassin's dagger, strikes him dead, while his accomplices are seized and removed. Catherine enters, in imperial robes, led in by Lefort; Peter declares that she is the empress of his choice, and a joyous chorus concludes the whole.

The great fault of this piece is the want of that life-like air, that semblance of reality, which is necessary even in a work of imagination, and without which there can be no such thing as interest. It may be permitted to make the future Czarina a suttler-girl at Saardam; but Catherine's subsequent adventures—her appearance at Pultowa in the nick of time to discover a plot—her going on a self-created but successful diplomatic mission to the Turkish Vizier—her again appearing at Moscow, as destitute as ever, and again in the nick of time to discover a conspiracy—are all so absurd that the feeling, "incredulus odi," is irresistible. Scribe has succeeded in making his grand operas at once powerful and affecting dramas, and vehicles for the most gorgeous combinations of sight and sound; but there is only one Scribe.

It was natural to expect from M. Jullien a *bruyant* style of music; but in this opera he has carried the *strepitoso* to a height we certainly did not anticipate; for we thought that in writing for the opera stage he would have avoided anything like the "Army Quadrille" or the "Quadrille of all Nations," at his promenade concerts. But it was not so; he gave full swing to his propensity for noise, and sometimes produced such a conglomeration of deafening sounds as we never heard before, except from himself. This was the more to be regretted as there were many good designs spoiled by being thus overcharged. He was constantly endeavouring to imitate Meyerbeer's grandiose orchestral and choral effects; but he copied Meyerbeer's faults, and exaggerated his exaggerations. We thought the author of the *Huguenots* and

the *Prophète* had carried the power of physical sound in music as far as it could well go; but he roars "like any sucking dove" compared to the author of *Pietro il Grande*. Jullien, moreover, has not merely borrowed Meyerbeer's general manner, but has directly imitated many particular passages. Rossomak's war-song, sung by Formes in the second act, is taken from Marcel's famous "Pif-paf," in the *Huguenots*. The chorus of conspirators in the same act is a reminiscence of the "benediction of poniards" in the above opera; and in the third act there is a passage, also in the chorus of conspirators, which strongly recalls the duet between Valentine and Marcel. There are constant traces, too, of Mozart, Rossini, and Weber; and a large proportion of M. Jullien's phrases have, by frequent previous use, become common property. He is most successful in his choruses, several of which are most spirited and effective; and least successful in his airs, every one of which is a decided failure. His choruses, generally in some familiar dancing measure, are rendered pleasing by their clear and strongly-marked rhythm; his songs, on the contrary, have no rhythmical melody, but are an unsatisfactory compound of air and recitative, without being either the one or the other. The first act is decidedly the best, and the best received. The opening chorus of workmen is plain, cheerful, and exceedingly agreeable. An unaccompanied chorus, denominated a madrigal, "In sen dell' amista," had likewise an excellent effect; but, beyond its being without instruments, it had nothing of the character of the madrigal. Much of the pleasure it gave was derived from the temporary relief to the ear caused by the silence of the orchestra; for the unvarying loudness of the accompaniments not only fatigued the ear, but in the concerted scenes, so overpowered the dialogue that it was often impossible to follow the singers even with the libretto. The gem of the opera is the national Russian hymn, "Di Muscovia eletti figli," sung in the first act as a solo and chorus; afterwards as the finale to the first act; and lastly as the finale to the opera. The melody has much simple grandeur; and it is harmonised and arranged with great skill and the happiest effect.

The second act is little more than a military show, certainly of extraordinary splendour;—troops marching, the Emperor and his suite on horseback, military bands, drums and fifes, cannons booming, volleys of musketry, the whole accompanied with the roar of human voices and the clangour of brazen instruments—formed a hurly-burly which reduced the dramatic action to insignificance. The whole of this act was coldly received, and audible expressions of disapprobation came from many quarters. The third act went off much better; though the ballet in the banquet scene evidently wearied the audience. The splendid Russian hymn, however, which formed the finale, restored good humour, and brought the opera to a close with considerable éclat.

The character of Peter was performed by Tamberlik, Catherine by Anna Zerr, and Rossomak by Formes; and it is impossible to speak too highly of their strenuous and powerful exertions to do justice to the piece. High praise is also due to the orchestra, to the chorus, and to the admirable taste and magnificence of the spectacle.

The house was very full; M. Jullien, along with the principal performers, was called for at the end of the first act, and again at the end of the opera.

(From the Morning Chronicle.)

M. Jullien's long-promised and much-talked-of opera of *Pietro il Grande* was, after several postponements, produced last night. These postponements could easily be understood by all who witnessed the performance, from the vast elaborations of the *mise en scène*, and the huge bodies of performers to be wielded and drilled. It is a pity that such unbanded expense and such unwearied exertions should have been lavished upon a work which, though meritorious in many points, does certainly not repay, by its musical excellence, the amount of talent which is employed to set it forth, and the labour with which it has been got up. The first act went tolerably well. The second displayed some of the most objectionable features of the opera—viz., noise and monotony. The third was dull, and fell flat; and altogether the impression produced, although of a mixed character, was not entirely satisfactory.

The prospect of an opera by M. Jullien excited, as was naturally to be expected, a very general degree of curiosity and anticipation. The position in art and in social estimation held by the composer, combined to invest the expected work with interest, and for some weeks past *Peter the Great*, its features, and its prospects, have formed the main topic of musical circles. M. Jullien, whatever his true rank as a musician, was certainly felt to be one of the notabilities of the day. He had originally brought himself into notice by a certain degree of good-humoured eccentricity in his style of conducting dance music. Next it was discovered that in this *genre* Jullien, both as a composer and a conductor, was an artist of no common powers. Under different *noms de plume*, he wrote for his Drury Lane orchestras works of pretension and of merit; and although, with a special worldly wisdom, he never neglected to cater for the effect-loving portion of his auditory, there still belongs to him the great merit of having been the first popular concert-giver, who familiarised the ordinary public with certain of the most noble symphonic movements of Beethoven and Haydn. The result, however, of the present experiment can only be pronounced to be partially successful. The composer has produced a work with more merits than many would be inclined to expect, but with greater weaknesses than his admirers had anticipated. Noise was one of its great drawbacks—noise monotonous in its colouring, and meaning so little that the ear became bewildered in the din, and lost all sense of the coherence and form of the composer's design. The brass instruments were, of course, used as the principal agency for these ineffective effects. What with the orchestra taxed to its utmost powers, and three bands, one of them entirely of brass, upon the stage, the tumult occasionally created can be well imagined. And, whenever introduced, this excessive *fortissimo* was far too long protracted—so long, indeed, that towards the close of the second act, after the audience had been but partially pleased by the *entrée* of the troop of horse, distinct marks of opposition were mingled with the applause. Nor were the more level portions of the opera generally of a high or thoughtful cast. There was at times a want of coherency and cogency—a lack of main idea with which to grapple—an absence of intention and meaning in much elaborate, ornamental instrumentation. We felt the want of buoyant and onward bearing, original and individual thought, and our sense of the deficiency was confirmed by the occasional lapses of the composer into the region of commonplace melodic ideas, and of those orchestral and vocal phrases which seem the joint-stock property of the whole tribe of modern musicians. Sometimes the idea of a chorus was evidently a hint from Meyerbeer. The vocal phrasing of the melodic passages allotted to the principals, was as frequently based entirely upon the modern Italian school, and although they were gracefully and flowingly written, the effect of reminiscence was not too strong to be noticeable. These compositions were also too long, degenerating occasionally into insipidity, which fell listlessly upon the audience, and afforded no *point d'appui* of any consequence to the singers. With all these defects, however—defects in treatment, and weaknesses of original invention—M. Jullien's opera is anything but destitute of redeeming points. On the contrary, it possesses its passages of strong colour, piquancy, and rhythm, when the dramatic element is invoked, and there are veins of melody, which fall very pleasantly upon the ear. Some of the most effective bits are the clamorous choruses of the Russian soldiers, and a clever imitation of a madrigal in the first act. The instrumentation is also very ingenious, and showed a great command of orchestral resource, the combinations of instruments being frequently fanciful, and managed with the plastic skill of an experienced musician. On the whole, then, we rose from the performance with the sensation that an overweening affection for noisy and brassy outbursts, too long protracted, went far to ruin the more unpretending composition dictated by M. Jullien's better star. A liberal allowance, of excision, getting rid of what we may call mere expletive music, pruning down also to some degree the cavatinas and duos for tenor and soprano, and bringing closer together and increasing the effect of the really meritorious *morceaux*—a process of this kind would vastly improve the opera of *Peter the Great*.

After what we have stated, but a brief account of details will

be necessary, and we shall merely particularise the main musical features. The choral reception of the *évandières* in the dockyard scene, was pretty and piquant, albeit rather of a dancing character. Madame Anna Zerr's opening cavatina was evidently written for her peculiar voice, in all its flexibility and extent of upper notes. It contains reminiscences of *Zauberflöte*, but was, on the whole, effective. The madrigal in this scene, the melody of which is taking was encored. And then followed the *gen* of the opera, a noble old Russian national march, or hymn, with grand and simple cadences, and was very loudly redemanded. It recurs in the score where Peter goes on board his ship. The opening chorus of the second act, in which Rossomak sings a fierce war song, and squabbles with the company, was long, heavy, and ineffective, while a band of Saxe instruments was particularly noisy. An excellently voiced quartet, however, redeemed the chorus, and was, after some opposition, encored. This quartet is skilfully and effectively harmonised, and is amongst the most effective *morceaux*. The very long and Donizetti-ish duo between Tauberlik and Mdle. Zerr fell listlessly upon the audience. A very noisy sestet which follows, contains undoubted hints from the *Huguenots*; indeed, the orchestral treatment is clearly borrowed from Meyerbeer; and then we had the military scene, with the mounted band, followed by an interminable series of warlike choruses, each one more clamorous than another, until the curtain fell, certainly to the relief of those before it.

The music of the third act is not so noisy as that of those which went before it; but the pervading want of idea makes it monotonous; while the ballet, with which the more sombre music is broken, introducing as it did a Mdle. Adriencé, a Russian danseuse, was hardly successful in bringing sunshine on the gloom.

It will be seen that *Peter the Great* affords really no opportunity for great vocalism or great acting. The two principals have to sing fatiguing and up-hill parts, without the possibility of producing an effect or making a hit; and when we state that they exerted themselves with the greatest and most continued care, we have said every necessary word. Formes had a poor and ineffective part, and Signor Tagliafico, with several of the secondary artists, laboured conscientiously to make their up-hill work as taking as might be. The chorus was wonderfully correct, and deserves unlimited praise. Such steadiness, decision, and crispness of execution in the performance, of most complicated and difficult music, were really admirable, and betokened the most painstaking practice, and the most rigid discipline.

The getting up of the opera was in every respect magnificent. Such a shrine might well lodge the greatest emanations of musical genius. The dockyard and the review scenes were perfect bits of spectacle, although the taste of introducing so many horses is open to be canvassed. Throughout, the whole of the dresses were new from head to foot, and the most expensive accoutrements were lavishly supplied, in order to the production of a thoroughly characteristic representation of the Russian armies of the period of Peter. Indeed, all which the most enterprising of managements could effect was performed; and for any want of success which attended the opera, the exclusive blame must rest with the composer.

#### (Morning Chronicle.—Second Notice.)

We have to congratulate M. Jullien on the great improvement which last night was visible in his opera—subjected, as it evidently had been, to a system of wholesome and judicious entailment. The audience evidently shared the opinion, and the second and third acts, both of which went unsatisfactorily on the opening performance, were last evening as prosperous as the first. The opera, indeed, is shortened by nearly an hour. We dare say the cuts went to M. Jullien's heart, but he showed his good sense, and amenity to advice in making them, and last night he reaped the benefit. *Peter the Great*, as it is now played, is a far more agreeable performance than it was on the first night. It has lost much of the monotony of which we complained, by the shortening of the choruses and the excision of the repetition of vocal passages and stage business originally performed more than once. The chorus in the first act, and the threatening of Roumi with the axe, have



been compacted with great advantage, and the ballet has been shortened. So also of the ballet in the third act; while in the second there has been a regular sweep made of all the horses. There is no defiling of the army—the scene opening in nicely-arranged groups of northern warriors instead; the brass bands are kept within limit, and the latter portion of the act, particularly the terribly lengthened chorus which we remarked on Tuesday, is cut down to far more modest dimensions. We repeat that the improvement has been great. The good points remain the same, but they are brought closer, and thus made to support each other; while the general effect is far lighter and more varied.

(From the Morning Herald.)  
The delays that have taken place with regard to the production of Jullien's *Pietro il Grande* have scarcely occasioned surprise. The sort of bizarre creation with which the name of the popular composer is orchestrally associated, led us easily to surmise that the gestatory process, when an "opera" was concerned, would be unusually laborious and difficult. Hence the postponement of this curious novelty, from day to day, has been borne more complacently than might otherwise have been the case. Rumour, however, has been busy with various reasons to account for these perpetual delays. Costa, it is said, had resolutely objected to conduct the opera of a polka-writer, and this, which nobody at the outset believed, was confirmed last night by the presence of M. Jullien himself, who took his seat in the orchestra amid applause of no brief or feeble kind.

The trial was one of some moment. Whatever fame M. Jullien has achieved in this country, has certainly not been gained by any other works than those of a most ephemeral complexion. Few have known better than this diligent gentleman how to secure the popular suffrages—how to win the popular ear—by tunes rhythmically piquant, by progressions divertingly odd, and by orchestration cleverly fantastic. As a writer of dance music, he may fairly take rank with your Musards, Strausses, and Labitzkys. To plunge, therefore, at once into the regions of grand opera, and to write for vocalists of the noblest fame, was the yearning of a measureless ambition. Had the connection between the composer and the manager not been of such an intimate character as it is, it is probable that the Jupiter of promenade concerts would have sighed in vain for the opportunity which has now been afforded him. His experiment in these new fields of musical invention has had every possible chance. There was the finest band of instrumentalists in the world at his disposal—a point of sublime importance—a group of first-rate singers, an army of experienced chorists; a stage of unequalled capacity for scenic display, and a lessee who was willing to bestow upon spectacle all that spectacle required. With all these prime and signal advantages, the operatic muse of M. Jullien enjoyed a rare amount of practical help; and *Pietro il Grande* came forth in as perfect a form as liberality could possibly conceive or compass.

That M. Jullien would bring together a quantity of striking effects in illustration of his theme was but a natural expectation, and occasionally there was no disappointment. He is not wedded to a particular school, unless it be that of Meyerbeer, whose thick and ponderous ensembles he sometimes very happily imitates. But, amid much tiresome verbosity, his own eccentricities of device frequently prevail; and the concerted pieces are worked up to blasts of climax from which tender ears would instinctively recoil, for mere physical reasons. The score is full to a degree; and not only does M. Jullien use all the ordinary resources with unparing copiousness, but he introduces no less than three military bands—those dazzling accessories of his coming out with great and trying force in the second act, where there are military debaucheries to paint; and a review, and a battle into the bargain. But the penury of intellectual musical idea is visible; indeed. The repetitives and forceaux d'ensemble simply betray a succession of reiterations. Energy and volubleness go hand in hand—broken here and there by little graceful bits, in which the obligato wind instruments are employed with that peculiar piquancy for which M. Jullien is so justly celebrated. In dealing with a work of art of such a huge and unwieldy magnitude, we can but speak in generalities; though if we are called upon to cite those passages in

which it may be affirmed there lies a special merit, we might refer to the choruses in the dockyard, the figured finale of the first act, and some portions of the consultation of the Russian generals. The music which precedes the battle is noisy and disjointed, and the audience last night, who at once felt the introduction of horses to be a vulgar *coup de theatre*, worthy only of the Hippodrome, commenced a battery of hisses, which the choruses of the soldiery, cruelly redundant and protracted, only augmented. Public patience was exhausted, and the curtain fell upon the second act amid very apparent and decided dissatisfaction.

The vocal solos are also too long. Catherine's cavatina, "O mio gentil," is sadly dry and unvoiced; and the scene, in which she invokes a blessing on Peter's head, and describes the disturbed state of her feelings with regard to him, is not only monotonous, but most heavily weighted by the instruments, which towards the close are worked up into a perfect hurricane. The air in the third act, "O ciel d'un afflitta," is suggestive of misery and despair, but the phraseology is anything but new. Peter's cavatinas, "Per sempre addio," and "Ah, se tu m'ami ancor," are framed upon the Felicien David model, both being characterised by a voluptuous languor, but enriched with some very delicious effects for the oboes, bassons, and violoncellos. His air in the second act, "Non partire," owes its origin to the languishing ditties of Donizetti, with one of which it would appear to be almost identical. Rossomak, the principal bass, is of course amply provided with solos; but his most prominent effort is his war-song, "Dell'armi il suon è il nostro amor," which—a bold, reckless strain, declaratory of Cossack lawlessness and Cossack delight in feats of broil and rapine—has obviously been inspired by the "Piff-paff" of Meyerbeer, the grim and ruthless tourney of which is very cleverly paraphrased. The great duet—that between Peter and Catherine, in the second act, is woefully long; and though the opening theme is pretty, it is of a very hackneyed cast; while the cabaletta is downright commonplace. The quartet, "Di stupore" (far too like "Mi manca la voce"), is closely and solidly written, and one of the most effective of the concerted pieces. The madrigal, "In sen dell'amistà," is light and tripping, and with certain madrigalian lineaments about it; but they are incidental rather than continuous. There is an unaccompanied moreau sung in the tent of Peter, by him and his generals, which, in the close of a scene strongly Meyerbeerish in its tone and texture, startles the listener by its loudness, bordering on a shriek, with which it is enjoined to be sung. But the Russian hymn, based upon a national melody, which runs more or less through the opera, and under circumstances of particular elaboration and grandeur in the first act, is the thing for the popular ear. Jullien has made the amplest use of this subject, which, in the situation to which we have referred, he has scored with a fullness and breadth tending to a climax of the most catching boisterousness. This "hymn," so set and enriched, we may look for with confidence at future promenade concerts. The prayer of nuns, is a good specimen of the prescriptive ecclesiastical style. The ballet music of the first act demands unqualified approbation. That of the third is not so felicitous. Nevertheless, the waltzes, mazurkas, and polonaises which Jullien has introduced, apropos to the careless merriment of the dockyard, and the more refined festivities of the court, are quite worthy of his name. The execution of the opera was highly creditable to all concerned in it. Tamberlik had apparently been especially measured by Jullien; and this able and vigorous artist sang the music with an energy and fire that astonished, and sometimes even astounded, the audience. The vocal duties belonging to Peter are of a very onerous kind. The strain upon the voice is immense, in which respect Jullien has laboured, it would seem, to outdo Verdi. But Tamberlik met all the emergencies of the moment with his accustomed *verve* and spirit, and triumphed over the notes in "high places" with marvellous skill and truth. Madame Anna Zerr, having got over a certain trepidation and uncertainty which troubled her at the outset, was equally effective as Catherine, which part, like that of Peter, seemed to have been written with reference to the ways and means of a particular artist. Madame Zerr's experience in music of this irregular class was brought into useful requisition, and the composer had reason to be grateful to her for

the pains which she manifested throughout. Formes, likewise, sang and acted with the utmost care. He personated the revengeful and dangerous Rossomak with due ferocity; and his large and portentous voice was genially employed in the delivery of malevolent and threatening apostrophes. He gave the war-song to which we have alluded with ~~energy~~ body and purpose. We must content ourselves with including Stigelli, Tagliafico, and Polonini in one general compliment, for all exerted themselves with a like steady and unrelaxing zeal.

As far as we could judge of the *mise en scene* from the awkward and imperfect glimpse we had of it, it seemed to be unusually liberal. In the second act there is a multitudinous display of soldiery, the effect of which, viewed from the centre of the house, was no doubt striking and picturesque. The ballet in the first scene, and that of the ball-room in the Kremlin, which was brilliantly lighted, were executed chiefly by Madame Robert and M. Alexandre. The minuet in the ball-room was, however, given by a Madame Adrienoff, who had been imported, it was said, expressly from Russia for the purpose. The lady in question is an expert artist, and, to all outward appearances, is a trustworthy exponent of the dances of her country; but her reception was not flattering. The audience hissed her roundly. She was not, however, without staunch and vehement supporters.

There was, of course, considerable applause at the fall of the curtain. Jullien was loudly called for, and responded to the summons, in company with Madame Anna Zerr and Tamberlik.

(Morning Herald.—Second Notice.)

Since the first representation, on Tuesday evening, Jullien's *Pietro il Grande* has experienced numerous needful abbreviations, and the opera is now not only much reduced as to dimension, but terminates considerably before midnight. Excisions have been made, more or less, throughout the work, the principal extinction being the battle, which occupied so large a space of the second act. The absence of this, and also of the horses, was felt last night to be a vast improvement, and the curtain fell amid rounds of applause. The vocalists exerted themselves to the utmost, and the opera "went," in every respect, much more advantageously than upon the former occasion. Approbation, consequently, was very often and very freely expressed, and the composer was called for at the close of each act. *Pietro il Grande*, in a word, seems likely to terminate the season with great *clat*.

(Morning Post.—Second Notice.)

The lateness of the hour at which the above new opera concluded on Tuesday evening, precluded the possibility of our speaking in detail of the performance in our impression of yesterday. As a spectacle, we pronounced *Pietro il Grande* to be one of the most attractive things ever put upon the stage; and we also gave, in general terms, a highly eulogistic notice of the principal singers; but still much was necessarily left unsaid in that, our first critique, upon the execution of a new work of great pretension, which, although it commenced at half-past seven in the evening, did not conclude until one on the following morning. We now, therefore, return to the subject, in the hope of doing more ample justice to everybody concerned.

Tamberlik, who is always earnest and correct, frequently fervent, and at times finely impassioned, never certainly exerted himself more strenuously, or with happier success. The physical powers obeyed throughout the impulses of the spirit, and whilst the executant's art was most heavily taxed, the possibility of its making a great deal out of almost nothing, was never more clearly exemplified. It was truly astonishing to observe the effect made by the singer, even when he had to deal with the poorest conceits, and stalest of platitudes. None but a man of uncommon intelligence and imagination could have imparted such deep and vivid dramatic colouring, such broad and just effects of light and shadow, to the faintest possible musical sketches: so much form, substance, and vitality, to the mere bald and irregular outlines of a vacillating and unskilful hand. There is nothing in the part of Pietro which the greatest artist in existence, by musical ability alone, could render agreeable. The purely lyrical element is dispensed with—the vocal *virtuoso* cannot shine

by his own light, be it never so brilliant, for it is to the realisation of dramatic and melodramatic "effects" that the author has exclusively aspired, and these are of so superficial and conventional a nature, so fragmentary and borrowed, that they can only be rendered tolerable by super-excellent execution.

Whoever, therefore, would represent the hero of this opera, should be a great actor, capable of singing very difficult and ungrateful music, of construing very vague and obscure suggestions, and infusing into hackneyed and wretched materials a spirit of freshness and novelty; and when we add that the possession of all these powers would be insufficient without a knowledge of equitation, the art of self-defence, and a faculty for shouting, it must surely be admitted that Tamberlik's task was a painful one, and that the fact of his general performance having delighted the audience is worthy of being placed in the category of modern miracles.

To Madlle. Anna Zerr, too, whose duties as Catherine were likewise very onerous, great praise must be awarded. Her acting was sensible and eminently graceful throughout. The simplicity and gentle affection she displayed, gave a sweet and equal tone to her dramatic picture, and whilst witnessing the heroic devotion to her royal lover, so unostentatiously exhibited by the poor *vivandiere*, and the unaffected expression of her almost hopeless love, we could not but deeply sympathise with the character, and greatly admire the actress.

Madlle. Zerr's singing was equally admirable. She executed some extremely awkward passages with remarkable skill; and, wherever sentiment or tenderness was required, her performance was eminently truthful and touching.

Herr Formes, whose delineations are never deficient in energy of character, exerted himself to the utmost to give effect to the part of Rossomak, the conspirator.

The music assigned to him is intensely ugly, but he contrived at times, notwithstanding, to make his ponderous voice heard to advantage, and his acting left nothing to be desired.

The character of General Lefort also received full justice from Tagliafico; and Stigelli, as Prince Mentshikoff, maintained his reputation as a most praiseworthy and useful performer.

Our opinion of M. Jullien's music has been already expressed. We counsel all who love trumpets, fifes, drums, ophicleides, the booming of cannon, deafening yells, and the chromatic scale, to lose no time in paying a visit to the Royal Italian Opera; and we can promise them, as additional inducements, one of the best performances and the most magnificent and original "*mise en scene*," ever seen upon the London stage.

## MUSIC AT MANCHESTER.

### BLIND ASYLUM CONCERT'S PROGRAMME, AUGUST 18.

Chorus, "Come gentle spring" ("The Seasons")	Haydn.
Solo, "The smiling dawn" ("Jephtha")	Handel.
Duet, "Oh! lovely peace" (Judas Maccabeus)	Handel.
Recit. and Air, "Deeper and deeper still" ("Jephtha")	Handel.
Chorus, "When His loud voice" ("Jephtha")	Handel.
Solo, "What tho' I trace" ("Solomon")	Handel.
Trio, "Lift thine eyes" ("Elijah")	Mendelssohn.
Solo, "Oh! rest in the Lord" ("Elijah")	Mendelssohn.
Trio, "Protect us thro' the coming night"	Schumann.
Anthem, "O! Lord our Governor"	Stevenson.

Conducted by Mr. J. F. Leeson, organist to the Asylum.

We had the pleasure of attending, on Wednesday last, one of the regular weekly concerts given by the pupils of this institution. Other engagements prevented our being present at the opening of the concert, but of such portion of the programme as we heard, it is our pleasing task to speak in the highest terms of commendation. We entered the room as the choir were singing the chorus from *Jephtha*. We scarcely ever remember the fugue beginning with the words, "They now contract," sung with greater precision; the points were all taken up with certainty and confidence, and

the running passages executed in all the parts with clearness and distinctness; we may also say that this difficult chorus was accompanied on the organ by one of the pupils, William Henry Crowder, a youth seventeen years of age, who gives promise of attaining some distinction in his profession. After the concert we had the opportunity of hearing this youth play a lengthy and elaborate fugue, which, we were informed, his tutor had only commenced teaching him a fortnight ago. The beautiful air from *Solomon*, "What tho' I trace each herb and flower," was very sweetly sung by a young female pupil, accompanied on the organ with great taste by a sister pupil. Mendelssohn's exquisite trio, "Lift thine eyes," as also the delicious *morceaux* from the same work, gave us the opportunity of listening to one of the purest contralto voices we ever met with. This young female also rendered the opening solo in the succeeding trio, "Protect us through the coming night," with considerable feeling and expression; indeed, the whole was a very chaste performance, and will bear comparison with artists of high pretensions. The concert closed with an anthem by Sir John Stevenson, "O Lord our Governor," a composition little known here. This piece opens with a tenor solo in two movements, sung by the old pupil, Davidson, with very considerable power and effect. This was followed by a duet for tenor and bass, "When I consider the heavens." After a short chorus, a recitative for the bass voice succeeded. "What is man, that thou art mindful of me?" reading on to a very beautiful quintet, the whole terminating with a chorus, "O Lord, how excellent is thy name." The construction of this somewhat lengthy anthem is simple in design, neither so grave as to be heavy, nor so light as to be unbecoming; the harmony throughout is clear and pure, and the melody agreeable to the ear without bordering on levity. Sir John's sacred compositions, which, we believe, are yet only partially known in this country, although not formed after the severe and the elaborate school of the early writers, are nevertheless such that, wherever heard and understood, must raise up for him a solid and lasting monument to his genius. We cannot leave this subject without expressing a strong word of praise to the choir and their talented conductor, Mr. J. F. Leeson, the stated organist and tutor to the institution, for the very efficient manner they acquitted themselves in the respective pieces. We trust the public and the patrons of the asylum will continue to support, as heretofore, these unpretending weekly musical meetings, which have now re-commenced for the season. It is here science is made to minister to charity, and, by lending our countenance and support to these weekly concerts, we have the opportunity of gratifying our own tastes, and, which is still better, the pleasing satisfaction of knowing that we are at the same time contributing an alms to one of the most excellent and deserving of our local charities. Before leaving the institution we had the privilege, by the courtesy of the governor and matron, Mr. and Mrs. Hughes, of witnessing the process of printing by a blind girl, executed from the very ingenious machine invented by Mr. Hughes. A notice of this clever piece of mechanism, copied from the report of the juries of the Great Exhibition, appeared in our columns a short time ago.

#### MUSIC IN OUR PARISH CHURCHES AND DISSENTING CHAPELS.

LAST Sunday week we attended Divine Service, from old associations, at the Independent Chapel, Cheshire, in Buckinghamshire, where we heard an excellent discourse preached by the

Rev. I. Barnes, from the 4th chapter of the Philippians, and the 8th verse: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, &c., if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." The minister handled the subject most ably, and recommended his hearers, through evil and through good report, to take the precepts of the text for their guide through life; and as there was virtue and praise in these things, they would eventually reap the reward.

The words of the text naturally suggested to our mind the immortal music to which Handel has associated these words, which are part of his Funeral Anthem composed for the funeral of Queen Caroline, 1737, and generally sung at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, at the interment of any of the royal family. Dr. Cumming states, in his lecture, "Music in its Relation to Religion," delivered before the Young Men's Christian Association, in Exeter Hall, January 29th, 1850 (a lecture all ministers would do well to read), Why should there be no congregation able to say at Christmas, "For unto us a child is born"? &c. His choir and congregation, we have no doubt, might do so, because he has secured the services of those who are competent to lead them; but on the present occasion we should have been satisfied could we have heard the psalm tune sung as the composer wrote it, in four parts, accompanied by an organ instead of a flute and violoncello, both most distressingly out of tune.

In the afternoon we went to the parish church, a very ancient building, delightfully situated on the west side of the town, which lies in a valley, completely surrounded by hills laden with wavy corn. At whatever part of the town you enter, you observe the church, "with its taper spire pointing to heaven." The church was built in the time of the Roman Catholics, and from monuments and inscriptions as far back as 1600, we observe that, according to the notions of that day, the church was beautified and adorned by erecting along each side rows of galleries, with timber enough in them to build a row of houses, and the bottom of the church covered with parlour-pews large enough for a family to dine in. We should like to see the whole of these galleries and pews taken away, the pulpit removed, and a stone one of much smaller dimensions erected on the side by the tower, with a reading-desk opposite to correspond. The present site occupied by the pulpit might be advantageously filled up with a useful organ, and seats for a choir—two things much required; for will it be believed that chanting is attempted to the Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, and Glorias, without an organ accompaniment? Our old friend, who led the singing in early life with a clarionet, at the Independent Chapel, but was afterwards promoted to the post of leader at a village church, about four miles distant, at a salary of about £3 per annum, now takes the bass part of a chant on a bassoon; and in the midst of the Magnificat, another old friend joined in with his clarionet about half a note above the pitch of the bassoon. The effect was ludicrous. There were about five or six females with naturally fine voices, who, with cultivation, would make excellent first and second sopranos; our friend the bassoon-player should sing the tenor, and the clarionet-player the bass, assisted by the beadle—who, it must be observed, possesses a good bass voice. Upon this plan, with an organ to accompany them, there might be some chance of getting the congregation to join, provided they would make use of the means, and meet once in a week to practise under the direction of a choir-master; at all events, the juvenile portion of the congregation might, under the superintendence of their esteemed vicar.

In the pew before us, we observed a lady with a most melodious voice; but who, there being such a wide distance between the pitch of the clarionet and the bassoon, like ourselves, found it impossible to follow either, and so was compelled to remain, as the rest of the congregation were—silent. However, if the people at church have not been instructed to sing, there can be no excuse for their not saying aloud the responses; for there can be few in the nineteenth century but what have learned to read. What a fine effect would be produced, if the whole congregation were to intone in the same pitch of voice as the clerk! And what does the Prayer-book say on the subject?—"The General Confession to be said by the whole congregation after the minister," &c. The Absolution, or Remission, to be pronounced by the minister



alone; but "the people shall answer here, and at the end of all other prayers.—Amen." Then the Lord's Prayer, which the people are commanded to repeat. Then, likewise, he shall say—

"O Lord, open thou our lips. And our mouth shall show forth thy praise." And yet, with these commands and instructions, the people generally remain silent. Some will say, We repeat the responses inwardly. The Prayer-book says you are to pronounce them with a loud voice.

In the evening we went to the General Baptist Chapel, where the flutes, oboes, clarionets, bassoons, ophicleides, and serpents some few years back received notice to quit, and their places have been supplied by a neat finger-organ of sufficient power to accompany the singing, for the present ably and gratuitously played by Mr. William Darvell, an amateur of no mean acquirements in sacred music, and to whose zeal and indefatigable perseverance the congregation is in no small degree indebted for the improvement in the musical portion of the service. The choir consists of about six females with fine, fresh voices, who sing beautifully in tune; but, alas! they have but little knowledge of music, and no one to instruct them by notation; so that every tune has to be learnt by ear; yet, with the assistance sometimes of an alto, tenor, and bass, they manage to make a decent quartett, and their singing must be pronounced the best in the town, because it is upon a right system. The tunes selected on Sunday evening were Herts, Reliance, and St. Olaves, and the arrangement from the "London Psalmist," as used by the London Sacred Harmonic Society at Exeter Hall, and many of the metropolitan congregations—one that is simple and melodious, and not too difficult for congregational purposes. This choir might be much improved by securing the services of one more efficient alto, tenor, and bass, whose attendance could be regularly relied on, and who should meet once in a week, with the organist, to rehearse the music appointed to be sung on the following Sunday, and these persons should be remunerated for their loss of time; and, if we mistake not, the managers of our churches and chapels are very blind to their own interests in not having the musical portion of the service performed with decency, and in order.

We could not help noticing with regret the emptiness of the pews in all the above places, compared to what they were some years ago, when all denominations could boast of a good choir of singers and composers among their numbers, who, if they occasionally introduced their own compositions, were not altogether neglectful of the study and practice of the musical inspirations of the old masters, Luther, Tallis, Purcell, Ravenscroft, Battishill, Gibbons, Croft, Greene, and others' compositions. Congregations would do well to study at home privately, and parents should give instructions for their children to be taught this style of music at their boarding and day schools, instead of being instructed only in the art of playing polkas, and learning to sing a few trifling ballads, which serves to give them a distaste for what is really sterling and good in music. We hope to see the time when every child shall be taught its notes as well as its letters; one is quite as easy as the other; and then, when we have music-books as common in our pews as psalm and hymn-books—then, and not till then, shall we have good choir and congregational singing.

On the Friday previous a festival, or feast, took place in the park, the use of which was kindly granted by the owner, William Mandes, Esq., on which occasion all the children connected with the Church Sunday Schools were provided with an excellent dinner, consisting of roast beef and plum pudding, after which the teachers and above 600 of the public were admitted to a repast, at 1s. each person, for which they were provided with ham-sandwiches, plum-cake, and tea in abundance; added to which, they had the honour of being waited upon by the noble Squire and his friends, who spared neither labour nor expense to make every one as happy and comfortable as possible. The only drawback was the weather, which was very unpropitious, and prevented hundreds attending who had made arrangements to come from a distance. However, there was a great preponderance of the fair sex present, who were not alarmed at a shower of rain; and few

country places can boast of ladies with finer figures, more pleasing countenances, or happier dispositions, than the girls of our town. The Thame brass band was engaged for the occasion, and enlivened the scene by playing most of the popular music of the present day; but nothing surprised or pleased us more than the magnificent chorus of Handel's, "Fix'd in his everlasting seat," in which the ophicleide-player made the thunder of his instrument roar again. We are glad to learn that the proceeds of the sale of tickets and donations defrayed the expenses of the entertainment.

#### AN INTENDED CRITICISM ON JULLIEN'S OPERA FROM A MORNING COTEMPORARY.

PIETRO IL GRANDE.  
LAST night, a new "grand opera," bearing the above title, the libretto being by Mr. Desmond Ryan, and the music by Mr. Jullien, was produced at the Royal Italian Opera.

This is a phisicological and aesthetical age, fond of first causes, which nobody understands, or ever will understand. Sir Charles Coldstream failed to discover "anything in anything," and perhaps there is nothing in anything. Who knows? Not we, certainly. Your hand, reader, is differently shaped from ours; your hair is of another hue, and perhaps you have more of it. May not your brain, too, have a different structure—your reasoning powers a peculiar conformation, which prevents you from mentally perceiving things precisely as we see them? Why should not Fitzball or Bunn be as great as Shakespeare?—why not Verdi or Jullien as eminent as Mozart? They do not appear so to us, certainly, but they may possibly be so to you.

We are for liberty. We are born in a land of liberty, and we love it. If a man chooses to call discord harmony, disorder order, quaintness beauty, or noise grandeur, why, let him: our Christian hug is ready whenever he likes to receive it, although the apical form of our brain may force us to differ from him in opinion.

We have a prejudice that nothing essentially opposed to what is good can be good—that diversity is not identity. That black is not white—but are still willing to admit the possibility of our being mistaken. We believe that many composers, finding it impossible to sustain their art upon the eminence to which Mozart raised it, imagine that the production of something new may possibly compensate for the absence of that beauty which they have not the faintest idea how to imitate or perpetuate. Immense masses of instruments huddled together without order or purpose—a number of trivial ill-assorted figures forced into each other's society, where they create the same species of wonder which fills us on beholding the "Happy Family" cage, in which several dissimilar animals are obliged to live together—wretched lugubrious attempts at fugal counterpoint, most extreme modulations, and absolutely false harmonies, do not, we think, constitute music fit for a "grand opera," even if the subjects were original; but when we find that these are almost all borrowed, the case, at least to us, assumes a still more unpleasant aspect, and we cannot help concluding, that had the author possessed any one attribute of musical excellence, he could not so far have committed himself. But we advance these things timidly, for we may be wrong, and it is our duty to guard against prejudice and persecution. Mr. Jullien may be, in his way, a Galileo, or an unpoisoned Socrates, and we nodules supposing always that philosophy and noodle-dom are not unsubstantial ideas insusceptible of demonstration. However, let not those even who are of our opinion be too hasty in condemning Mr. Jullien. If his music is not so good as it might be, many excuses may be made for him. He has probably not enjoyed, at least of late years, the painful advantages which destiny showers with a lavish hand upon true artists. Rich, fêted, and caressed—his very picture, possessing a current value, he is one of the "sleek darlings of the world." Fortunate without study, successful without effort, why should he give himself any trouble? The poor unfriended artist, who (visionary as he is), sees in his calling a Divine mission, and, through penury and misery, struggles to keep unstained the purity of his soul, may be a pitiable object, but he still possesses some very decided advantages over the "popular man." He is not sought by the public, and, therefore, can enjoy a state of isolation, and

solitude highly favourable to meditation. Not coming into collision with the world, he escapes its corrupting influence. Not being exposed to the temptations of a richly furnished table, his digestion remains sound; an inestimable advantage, appertaining especially to the poor. He is not flattered by a vile mob into the belief that his evil is good. Sitting at a bad piano, in a worse back room, belonging to a dirty house, in a dirtier street, he ponders over the mighty works of his predecessors, and converses with their immortal spirits. He fancies himself, perhaps, presiding over some grand orchestra for the first performance of his maiden work. Spirits of Hope hymn his praises, and his eyes glisten with emotion on hearing ideal applause—on fancying that he was helped to cheer the hearts and refine the minds of his fellow-travellers through the "vale of tears." All this exercises his imagination; and if the door of his humble dwelling be suddenly invaded by some important creditor, a state of nervous irritability, by no means unfavourable to the development of a poetical temperament, is immediately produced.

Some people would call such a person a wrapt enthusiast, or a monomaniac. Perhaps he is both, but we still will think him much more likely to produce fine works than his sane and popular brethren. But the ever-progressing dial warns us to return without further delay to the actualities of last night's performance, which was truly a brilliant one as regards scenic splendour and executive excellence. The *mise en scene* surpassed anything we remember to have seen. Grieve, the unrivalled and inimitable, has fairly outshone himself on this occasion. The sea view from the dockyard of Sardan in the first act, the imperial tent before Pultava in the second, the moonlight view of the Kremlin at Moscow during a snowstorm, and the grand illuminated ball-room of the palace, in the third act, are triumphs of stage pictorial art which we believe no other scene-painter in Europe could achieve. They were immensely and deservedly applauded. Neither must the praises of the costumers, "property-man," or stage director be left unsung; for, to the combined efforts of all these ministrants to outward show, the success of "Peter the Great" is mainly to be attributed. Not that the singers and band were deficient in energy, or ability—on the contrary, they exerted themselves to the utmost, and with great success; but they had difficulties to contend against which precluded the possibility of their keeping the house in good humour, without the powerful aid of scenic accessories. Tamberlik, as the hero, sang and acted in his very best style. Madlle. Zerr, too, as Caterina, is deserving of the highest eulogy. So are Herr Fornes (Rossozak), Herr Stigelli (Prince Menschikoff), Signor Romini (Zinberg), Signor Tagliafico (General Lefort), the choristers, and *Corys de Ballet*, with one unhappy exception. But still the finest acting, singing, playing or dancing in the world, would not have saved the Great Peter from damnation, without the assistance of the painter's, decorator's, and tailor's arts. These, however, were not the only means employed to render M. Jullien's music palatable; for sixteen real horses, and three military bands, in gorgeous costumes, paraded the stage, to furnish additional fascination to the sight, and increase the tremendous uproar by which the popular composer realises his "grand effects." Never, in our recollection, were such dense masses seen upon a stage; and never were there more picturesque groupings, or better disciplined *ensemble* movements, than they showed us last night.

Mr. Desmond Ryan's libretto possesses a sufficiently interesting plot, and some good situations, but the poetry, we presume, was made to be sung rather than criticised. And M. Jullien's music—what is to be said of that? Will not the general allusions we have made to his knowledge and capacity, suffice to give an idea of our opinion of it? If not, we will express ourselves briefly and clearly. It is execrable. Generally speaking, however, the opera was well received.

Some mirth was excited in the first act by an abortive attempt made by a herald to deliver an important message, amid the braying of countless trumpets, and the fearful, nerve-lacerating row which continued almost uninterruptedly throughout the second act, created considerable disapprobation. The strange antics, too, of the new Russian dancer in the last scene elicited much laughter and sibilation, but with the exception of these *contretemps*, all went smoothly.

There were\* two *encores* in the course of the evening, and the composer was honoured with the "customary ovations."

P.S.—On quitting the theatre we were informed that a most awful thunder-storm had raged in the neighbourhood of Covent-garden during the second act of "Pietro il Grande," but such was the mighty power of M. Jullien's orchestra that it fairly out-roared the artillery of heaven, and saved the audience of the Royal Italian Opera from the alarm they would infallibly have experienced had the entertainment been of a more classic nature.

### Original Correspondence.

(To the Editor of the Musical World.)

SIR,—I have received letters from several of the clergy, and members of the musical profession, on the subject of English Church music; and, I trust, that a society will shortly be formed, for the improvement of Protestant Church music. We all see what great trouble is taken to obtain good music in private houses, and for the gratification of an evening party, yet the divine harmony of the Church is left unnoticed and neglected. We grudge neither time nor money to obtain our own secular enjoyment, but neither one nor the other is forthcoming, when required in the service of religion, where all our powers are demanded of us in the worship of Jehovah. Have we not also some cause for believing that a blessing will be vouchsafed, through the instrumentality of devotional music, as in the days of old, when it is related, that "David took a harp, and played on the harp with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him?" Again, "And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord was on Elisha." There is a want of sincerity in our Service which prevents the thoughts and affections of the mind joining in the psalm, "My heart is fixed, O God, I will sing and give praise with the best member that I have." Ought not this thought to be uppermost in the mind of every person who attends the devotional Service of our Church? Can we say, that the musical portion of the Service is performed in accordance with the above beautiful psalm? Certainly not. And ought we to remain satisfied with the present degraded state of this important portion of divine worship? Can we expect a blessing on such indifference, such laziness, such a profanation of the sublime rites of Christian devotion? Have we not organists who would do honour to any age, and composers, whose works contain the true spirit of divine harmony? Who has heard much of the Church music of the late Dr. Crotch, and many other of our English composers? And amongst our present organists, we have Dr. G. Elvy, Dr. Wesley, Dr. Bexfield, W. Best, &c., whose compositions do honour to the present age. Do we hear their anthems, chorales, chants, &c., used in our parochial churches, or even in our cathedrals? These noble productions are made to give place to some trifling arrangements: from some mass, or a psalm tune arranged from some popular air, or a chant taken from some melody played on a street barrel-organ. This is the present style of English Church music; therefore, I do conceive, that it is positively necessary, if we feel any interest in the Service of the Church, to use all our energy in correcting so disgraceful a state of things. The principal cause of the evil has been the appointment of incompetent persons to conduct the musical portion of the Service.

I must conclude this letter, and next week I may perhaps favour you with a few more remarks on this important subject.

I remain, your obedient servant,  
THE AUTHOR OF THE PAROCHIAL BOOK.

P.S.—I am very glad to find that some of the members of the profession have sent you their remarks, and I hope many others will follow their example.

Yours truly,  
EDMUND DAVISON,  
To the Editor of the Musical World.

Edinburgh, 14th August, 1852.

SIR,—I have read with great interest the remarks in your paper of the 7th, on the new organ built by Messrs. Gray and Davison.

In the only statement hazarded, the writer commits a mistake, there were three *encores*—the Madrigal, the Russian Hymn, and the Quartet—Ed. M. W.

for Eton College, and the well-merited animadversions on the scale almost universally adopted by British organ builders. There is one portion, however, of the article to which I feel called upon in self-defence to reply. You point to the use of pure tin in the construction of the front pipes, and of one interior stop, of the Eton organ, as being "novel in English work, and well worthy attentive consideration," and express your hope that "it will prove the first step to a general custom." Permit me to say that this is by no means the first step towards the use of pure tin pipes in this country; and Messrs. Gray and Davison, whose high reputation has been long established, can well afford to dispense with a compliment not justly due to them. The introduction of pure tin pipes is one of the changes in organ building which I have for many years been endeavouring to effect, in the assurance that an instrument so constructed would eventually be more satisfactory to the possessor, and reflect higher credit on the builder.

It is now nearly sixteen years since I made the first stop of pure tin pipes in this country, and the advantage of such work has now become so well known here, that for eight years past every church organ I have built has had metal pipes of pure tin, and also burnished front pipes, with the description of mouth still in vogue on the Continent.

Among these I may refer to one organ, which I have only lately finished for the private chapel of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch, at Dalkeith Park. This instrument is about the same size as the Eton College organ. It has three manuals, from CC to F, with eleven stops on the great organ, six on the choir, and six on the swell, with pedal keys on the German scale and form, and two octaves of pipes from sixteen feet C open. All the metal pipes in this organ, of which there are no less than 1,116, are made of pure tin. The front pipes, of which there are 70, are polished, and with the fashion of mouth you describe. His Grace's liberality and enlightened ideas allowed me to have my own way, both as to the compass and disposition of the organ, and the material employed. And I feel assured an inspection and trial of that instrument would induce other organ-builders to join me in forwarding the change I have so long advocated in theory and carried out in practice.

The statement I have thus briefly made will, I trust, convince you that I am entitled to the credit of being the first in Britain to adopt the improvements alluded to; and I feel assured that Messrs. Gray and Davison will be the first to justify me in claiming for myself "honour where honour is due."

In begging the favour of your giving this letter a place in your journal, I also take the liberty of enclosing a small brochure on the subject of organ-building, which I printed for private circulation several years ago, and which was reprinted last year. If you will take the trouble to peruse it, you will find advocated in it the very principles which the writer of your article so justly enforces.

I remain, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

DAVID HAMILTON,

Organ Builder to the Queen for Scotland.

#### COSSACK WAR-SONG, FROM "PIETRO IL GRANDE."

With ruthless hand we strike the foe!  
Our home is on the battle plain,  
Where groans arise 'mid heaps of slain!  
Death to all—no mercy show!  
When the cannon roars around,  
And deep thunders shake the ground,  
Thro' the flame and smoke we ride  
Dealing death on every side!  
And should some trembling wretch,  
With lifted hand, for pity pray,  
And plead for wives and babes,  
Left sad and lonely, far away;  
Shall we, to softness mov'd, our manhood shame?  
No, no!—  
Without remorse we pierce him thro'!  
And as the reeking sword we draw  
Resounds the Cossacks' wild "hurra!"

Or when some town by storm we take,  
With fire and sword our thirst we slake!  
To snatch the spoil thro' blood we go,  
Death to all—no mercy show!  
Thorough cot and palace high,  
Drunk with carnage, lo, we fly!  
We have right to rob and slay—  
'Tis our festal holiday.  
And should some widow pale  
Implore to spare the lowly shed,  
Where lived and died her sires,  
Where lie her sons and husband dead:—  
Shall we, by pallid brow or tears, be moved?  
No, no!—  
Her breast we pierce! the torch we throw!  
And as we mark the blazing straw  
Resounds the Cossacks' wild "hurra!"

#### Miscellaneous.

**ORGAN PERFORMANCE.**—On Monday evening last a selection of sacred and classical music was performed on the new organ, just erected in St. Matthew's Church, Islington. The pieces selected included compositions by Handel, Bach, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Haydn, Spohr, Dussek, &c. Mr. J. T. Cooper, the well-known organist of St. Paul's Church, Islington, presided on the occasion. The organ was built by Mr. J. Bullen, of Pulham, Norfolk.

**MME. LUCCI SIEVERS** has left London for Naples.

**HERR KUHE**, the pianist, has returned from Germany. He is engaged at the Birmingham Festival.

**MR. BRINLEY RICHARDS** has returned to London, after a six weeks' tour on the banks of the Rhine.

**MADAME CHARTON** has gone to Marseilles, where she is engaged at the Opera for the winter and spring.

**MADAME DE LA GRANGE** left for Paris on Monday.

**BALFE** is at Boulogne, *en famille*, breathing the sea air, while his admirers in London are filling the Surrey night after night at the representations of his new opera, *The Devil's in it*. That the devil was in it has been proved; and if, with that, the success had been doubtful, the devil's in it.

**ALBONI** is still at the Falls of Niagara.

**MADAME SONTAG** has arrived in London. On Wednesday she starts for the United States.

**SOPHIE CRUVELLI** is at Wiesbaden, on the Rhine. She gave a concert there on the 16th, which was brilliantly successful. Marie, her sister, is at Bielefeld, in Westphalia.

**MELANCHOLY DEATH OF AN OLD STAGE FAVOURITE.**—An accident occurred between four and five o'clock on Monday afternoon, by which Mr. Frank Hartland, who was for many years a great favourite on the London stage as a pantomimist, having been associated with the celebrated Grimaldi, lost his life. It appears that Mr. Kelk, the eminent builder of Pinlico, had entered into a contract for the restoration of eight or ten houses in Mount-street, Westminster-road, commencing at the corner of Hercules-buildings. On Monday afternoon Mr. Hartland happened to be passing, when his attention was attracted by a four-in-hand, driven by a nobleman, and which drew up at Cox's livery-stables, immediately facing the works in question. While in this position, what is technically called a "jigger" by builders, happening to give way, propelled a plank from the scaffolding, and in its descent struck Mr. Hartland with great violence on the side of the head, completely crushing in the skull. The unfortunate gentleman was taken in a state of insensibility to the surgery of Mr. Brooks, a few doors off; but that gentleman at once pronounced his case hopeless, and ordered him to be taken to St. Thomas's Hospital, on the way to which he died. Mr. Hartland has left a large family, hitherto entirely dependent upon him, to deplore their untimely loss.



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